WESTMINSTER COURT OF SEWERS.

A GENERAL Court of Sewers was held on Friday the 2nd, Capt. Bague in the chair.

Increased Powers of the Commission.—The solicitor to the commission attended the court this day, and reported that last night the bill for enlarging the powers of this commission had finally passed both branches of the legislature, by which this court is invested with most extensive powers in furtherance of sanitary purposes. The Act, amongst many important provisions, provides that no houses shall hereafter be built unless a sewer or drain be first constructed to the satisfaction of the commissioners, and any person building a house in contravention of this regulation may be punished by fine or amerciament; that all houses within 100 feet of a sewer shall drain into such sewer at the expense of the owners or occupier; and if the owners or occupier do not carry on and complete the same with all reasonable dispatch, the commissioners may construct the same and recover the expense by distress and sale of the goods and chattels either of the owner of such house, or the *present* or *future occupier*, but the occupier to be at liberty to deduct this amount from his rent. The owners of tenements abutting on any street to be liable to the expense of any sewer running through the same. The commissioners have power to make sewers where none previously existed, and to stop up or divert old lines of sewers; and if they observe any stagnant cesspool, or any ditch, &c., likely to be prejudicial to health, it shall be lawful for the commissioners to require the owner of the property to put an end to and abate the same, and in case it is not removed in a reasonable time, to impose such fine or amerciament as may be equal to the expense of removal, and levy the amount upon the party in the ordinary mode of distress. The Commissioners of Sewers for the time being are authorised to raise loans to be secured on the rates, and powers are also taken to enforce the repairing and cleansing of sewers, drains, &c., and that where it may be difficult to ascertain the owners of property, it shall be sufficient to describe the property either by name or number, or any other convenient mode; and the property of the owner or occupier may be seized and taken to any place and sold, or the said party otherwise proceeded against.

After some discussion, it was unanimously resolved that the thanks of this court be presented to the members of Parliament, the solicitors, and officers, who had conducted this bill through its various stages.

The Act will come into operation forthwith. It contains all the essential portions of Lord Normanby's bill, with such other additions as have been suggested.

The solicitor next brought before the court the consideration of the Thames Conservancy Bill, now in progress through Parliament.

After discussion, the following resolution was agreed to:—"This court having considered the solicitor's report as to the Thames Conservancy Bill, resolved, that this court is satisfied that it is of the utmost importance for the public health and security to the sewage that the saving clause be retained, and that the solicitors do take every possible step to support it, or prevent the insertion of any clauses which may impair the efficiency of the saving clause."

The report of the committee on view of the Counters Creek sewer was read, which pointed out several cases of illegal drainage, and also the absence of any drainage whatever in some parts of the district of Kensal New-town. The committee said, that the state of it was of the worst description, and that their attention had been particularly drawn to it by the parochial authorities of Chelsea.

A report having been made on the want of drainage in Long Acre, which populous thoroughfare, it appears, is without any sewer whatever, it was stated by the clerk (Mr. Hertslet), that the property belonged to the Mercers' Company, who had been applied to repeatedly in every possible shape and way, but every effort appeared to be in vain, as the company could not be induced to move at all in the matter. It was suggested, that a jury should be called out to compel the performance of the work required. A commissioner said that his brother, who lately occupied a house in that street, had been compelled to quit it in consequence of the intolerable nuisance arising from the want of the accommodation above described.

LOGARITHMOTECHNY.

Sir,—Mathematicians and the curious will, I have no doubt, be obliged to you for publishing the following result:—

Log π = [illegible]

For the information of the general reader, it may be necessary to add that π is the circumference of a circle when its diameter is represented by unity, or—

π = [illegible]

The logarithm of a number consisting of so many places of figures, has not been before calculated to any thing near this extent; for, by any of the known methods, such a calculation is almost impossible. Perhaps you will allow me further to add, that I have discovered a method by which the logarithm of any number, to almost any extent, may be calculated independently of other logarithms in a few minutes.—I am, Sir, &c.,

OLIVER BYRNE, Mathematician.

Correspondence.

OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT.

SIR,—Although, perhaps, it may occur to some that this subject does not come within the scope of your excellent publication, yet I think I shall be able to shew that it does very materially affect the interests of the classes to whose cause you are devoted. When I speak of "our" representatives, of course I refer to architects, engineers, artists, and builders, and my object in writing to you is to shew, that these classes are not properly represented in parliament, and to urge upon some public-spirited individuals of each class to come forward as candidates at the ensuing election.

All shades of political and religious opinion are represented in Parliament; the railway world, the legal world, indeed almost every profession has its advocate in Parliament; then why, I ask, should not we send our representatives to Parliament? Upon Parliament devolves the duty of framing laws and imposing duties and customs which vitally affect our interests, and who so capable of knowing the effect of the laws, duties, and customs as those whose every day avocation brings their working under their notice. I might bring forward many illustrations of this; thus, the Buildings Act, the Brick Excise, the Window Duty, and many matters connected with railroads, all come within the sphere of one or other branch of the building profession.

Then, again, the Parliament, in their national capacity, are erecting a palace for themselves; they have schools of design under their control, &c. &c., and surely those who have given their whole and undivided attention to these points, are most fitted to undertake their management. I have very great hopes that the present state of things will be remedied next session, for I have heard the names of two eminent builders, and one engineer, as likely to be "put up," and I should be very glad to hear the same of some eminent architects, and even artists, who might wish to retire, either wholly or in part, from the toils of their profession, and to devote a portion of their time to the public weal.—I am, Sir, &c.,

A. G.

BUILDERS' TENDERS AND COMMITTEES—BATTERSEA PARK.

SIR,—Having observed many articles in your valuable paper on the subject of builders' competitions, I am induced to address you on the subject, in the hope that through the medium of your journal, some unfair dealing will be exposed with respect to some estimates which were delivered at the office of the Battersea Park Building Society, 9, Bridge-street, Blackfriars, in pursuance of an advertisement which appeared in THE BUILDER of the 1st May, 1847.

The advertisement invited builders to tender for building twelve houses at Battersea on the 11th May, and several tenders were delivered in consequence.

Although I, as well as two other builders, have repeatedly called at the office, we can gain no information as to whose tender was accepted, the amount of the tenders, or the names of the parties tendering.

At Battersea, I have heard that the works are to be carried into execution by Messrs. Thompson and Morgan, but can hardly believe that can be the case, as those gentlemen were named as the surveyors. I send you the amount of my tender, and also that of another builder, who joins with me in wishing you would invite all builders to send to you the copies of their estimates for this job, with a view to their publication, so that although the directors sit with closed doors, the builders may know if fair play has been meted out, or that many builders have been put to the expense of preparing an estimate merely *for the guidance of the directors* in making a bargain with their surveyors, and not with any intention of accepting any one of the tenders sent in, in compliance with the advertisement. I inclose my name, and am—Yours, &c.

A BUILDER.

CLAY-BUILT COTTAGES.

Sir,—Your correspondent, "A Young Architect," does not say in what part of England he has seen cottages built of clay. In India, I know such primitive buildings exist, but the natives take care to protect them from denuding influences, by filling and surrounding them, before inhabited, with wood faggots;—fire is then applied, and the whole structure is thus thoroughly burnt *en masse*. In our climate, such a proceeding is much more necessary, and the neglect of it has led to the evil your correspondent complains of.—I am, Sir, &c.,

CHARLES JOHNSTON.
(Author of Travels in Southern Abyssinia.)

Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, July 3.

PLASTERING ON CLAY WALLS.

SIR,—In building clay houses, if a key be formed for the plaster in the same manner as that on plastering a ceiling or a partition, it would have the desired effect.

IVY ON CHURCHES.

To shew the baneful effects of destroying ivy on walls, some years since the then proprietor of Netley Abbey, in Hampshire, had a quantity destroyed. The consequence was, as the ivy decayed the stone-work mouldered and decayed, and a great portion fell down, which otherwise would have lasted for many years.

THE NEW ENTRANCE TO THE GARDENS AT KEW.

If Mr. Burton would apply the same process of wax, as used by Mr. Herring, to the piers at the entrance to the gardens, it might possibly be the means of preserving their carving, which is already in some degree affected.

OPENING OF THE KEW ROYAL GARDENS.—On Saturday, the pleasure grounds in connection with the royal gardens at Kew, were, according to annual custom, thrown open to the public, and will remain so until the end of September, when they will be again closed until the Midsummer of 1848.

IPSWICH.—Sir,—The Mechanics' Institute "job" has failed—the supporters of the movement not being able to persuade the majority of the members into a belief of the superiority of the proposed site, or the chosen design, over the existing accommodation. One person, at least, is satisfied, or ought to be, viz.—the successful competitor, who fixed the premium at five guineas, and——obtained it.—Apropos of this degrading affair, the following is a contribution to the curious notices sometimes observable in shop windows, or other advertising localities. It is copied literally from a shop-shutter, in the parish of St. Clement's, in this town, and runs thus:—"Superior Black-lead pencils for Architects and Carpenters." It seems to carry its own comment, does it not?

For the better prevention of such accidents as that of the Dee Bridge, would it not be well to add to D'Israeli's suggestion of hanging an architect, and Sidney Smith's, of burning a bishop,—the smashing of an engineer?

Yours, A

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